ONE DOZEN NOTEWORTHY HISTORICAL ITEMS

P L U S

Sixteen pages of text for

A TALK PROGRAM

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by

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Pontiac, Illinois

1986

This specially prepared booklet of noteworthy historical items--timely this December for the forthcoming sesquicentennial year--conveys this message:

WISHING

Jewell and Randell Morgan

A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Robert A. Schlosser

Special Note: The text and the masters from which these pages are copied are dedicated to and become the property of The Livingston County Historical Society. The invaluable assistance of my brother, Richard D. Schlosser of Joliet, Illinois, is certainly appreciated.
Robert Arnold Schlosser, November 1986.

PREFACE.

Fifty years ago, in September of 1936, our own Livingston County Historical Society was instrumental in erecting the monument that stands on the southeast corner of the courthouse square.

There is a good account of the erection of the monument on pages 7 and 8 in Paul Yost's book.

If one reads the message on the monument, it is learned that Livingston County and the town of Pontiac were both born in the year 1837. 1987 becomes a sesquicentennial year for the county and for the town of Pontiac.

It is the purpose of this program to review a portion of the history of Pontiac and of the county.

When Livingston County was formed, the population of the area was very small, and, apparently, there were no towns or villages within its boundaries.

Census records of 1840, three years after its forming, show that the total population of Livingston County was only 759.

Perhaps I should comment on two reference books that will be mentioned a few times. The 1878 History is the old favorite of most of us who search history. It was written by Otho F. Pearre, who did a beautiful job.

The 1940 History is a product of the WPA period in the thirties. It was produced by a team of three men who had the authority to search and comb courthouse records for the material to be used in the compiling of a handbook. Although it is a small paperback book, page after page is loaded with facts that are elaborately footnoted. It also refers to all of the known sources at the time of its printing. I find it a very helpful source.

And now, before we read item ONE of the one dozen historical items, if this is a talk program, does everyone have a copy of the the One Dozen pages? Keep in mind that this is a seminar type of program, you may ask questions at any time.

Illinois became a state in 1818, on the third day of December.

Eighteen years later, on the 27th of February in 1837, Livingston County was formed.

And now, in Item ONE, we learn that exactly five months later, another event took place:

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One Dozen (PLUS) Noteworthy Historical Items

by Robert Arnold Schlosser

ONE.

Birth of Pontiac, 27th of July 1837. The proprietors were: Henry Weed, Lucius W. and Seth M. Young. The surveyor who laid out the town of Pontiac was Isaac Whitaker (also spelled Whicher and Whisher). To sway the county commissioners to make Pontiac the seat of the county, the proprietors offered several inducements which included the building of a courthouse and the construction of a "good and substantial wagon bridge"* across the Vermilion River.

Ref. Deed book A, p. 63; *1878 History, p. 254; and 1940 History, p. 7.

Henry Weed and the two Youngs had come from New York and settled in this area in 1833. Henry Weed had married a sister of the Youngs, so he was a brother-in-law to them.

The proprietors gave a three thousand dollar bond, to insure their good faith in providing the inducements.

One account indicates that the bond was five thousand, and that the proprietors were to spend three thousand dollars on the building of the bridge and courthouse.

In those early days, with little or no population, Pontiac had no government of its own. It would not be until 1856 that the population of the town would be large enough to rate village status. It was the county seat and it was ruled by the county government.

Choosing the Pontiac location for the county seat was not popular with other areas of the county. Agitation mounted for moving the county seat to a higher and dryer location. This agitation actually had the effect of postponing the building of the courthouse and bridge.

In August of 1839 a vote was taken on the issue. (Ref. 1878 History, page 256.)

Pontiac narrowly won out in that competition, but only because it required a two-thirds majority to force the move.

Having survived the contest, it was time to get on with the building of a bridge and the courthouse.

The responsibility of getting on would not fall on Henry Weed or the two Youngs. The two Youngs had rather early deaths, and Henry Weed died in 1842 in the state of New York. Heirs, assigns and others became the proprietors of the town.

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TWO.

Good and substantial wagon bridge. The bridge specified in Item ONE was constructed in 1840 by Isaac Whitaker, county surveyor and engineer. Its cost was directly borne by the proprietors of the town of Pontiac. Most likely the bridge was built of timber, and it is doubtful that it was covered. If covered it would probably have lasted longer than seven or eight years, see item FIVE.

Ref. 1940 History, p. 22.

Although, only one reference is given that this bridge really was built, it seems to be a reliable source.

On page 17 of the same history, it is reported that the donors would undertake the building of a bridge within two years.

And, on page 254 in the 1878 history it states that a good and substantial wagon bridge would be constructed.

The bond that was given should also have insured that a bridge was built. The close vote in August of 1839, indicated that Pontiac should get things in order, or loose out in another voting test.

Was this bridge number one?

Or was there already a bridge not quite good? and a bit less than substantial? and not suitable for a wagon?

The early plat of Pontiac, which will be discussed a bit later, does not show any bridges. It is clear, though, that it was laid out for a bridge to be located at Main Street.

Although the early plat shows the mill property, the deed for that property was made after the birth of the town.

Apparently, the mill and the dam--probably made of lumber--were constructed in 1838.

After the dam and mill were in place, perhaps Mill Street became a better location for the bridge than Main Street.

There were fords across the river in numerous places; and make-shift foot bridges were in use.

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THREE.

Courthouse. The full cost of the first courthouse was also directly borne by the proprietors of Pontiac. It was built on the public square of land that had been donated by the proprietors, the same location that we have today. That first courthouse was accepted by two County Commissioners on 23 July 1842.

Ref. 1878 History, p. 299; and 1940 History, pages 21 and 72.

The size, style and other details of a courthouse were settled in September of 1839, just a month after the voting in August. With those items settled, the construction of the courthouse could begin.

Most reports indicate that the structure was built in 1839 and 1840. One report states that time would be given for a period when the river level was high enough for the saw mill to operate.

Early in 1841, an extension of time was arranged, but even then, another year went by before the courthouse could be accepted.

After the commissioners accepted the courthouse on 23 July 1842, the bond was returned to the proprietors.

Apparently the proprietors had agreed to spend three thousand dollars on the bridge and courthouse. It also appears that they paid all bills themselves, the trustees did not handle the money. Some historians estimate the cost of the courthouse at eight hundred dollars. The bridge would have been much less. Even with these savings, the proprietors may have had a loss on the Pontiac venture. Lots did not sell well, so they received little cash from that source.

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FOUR.

Plat of Pontiac. On 20 April 1847, county surveyor, Amos Edwards, filed a report about resetting the corner stone at the northeast corner of the public square. The report includes a plat of the town of Pontiac. Streets named on the plat have remained essentially the same. The most northerly street was North Street, the most southerly was South Street, the most westerly was Oak Street, and the most easterly was Hazel Street. The city, or town, limits extended a block beyond the first three named streets and a half block beyond Hazel.

Ref. Deed book A, p. 64.

The corner stone that was reset was the starting point for many survey projects for many years.

That half block beyond Hazel is noticed even today on East Water, East Washington, and East Madison Streets.

It is a short block between Hazel and North Riverview Drive on those streets.

Incidently, some years ago, North Riverview Drive was known as East Division Street.

On that early plat, the (saw) Mill property consists of two tracts separated by Main Street. Neither tract is subdivided into lots. The north boundary for both tracts is Water Street. The east tract is bounded on the east by Chicago Street and on the south by the river. The west tract is bounded on the west at the center line of Mill Street, and on the south by Short Street. Short Street is now known as River Street. Records indicate that the saw mill was erected in 1838.

Building lots were laid out along Main Street, for a block on the south side of the river and for many blocks on the north side, with the expectation of a bridge on that street.

The first addition to the original town was Fell's addition late in 1853.

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FIVE.

Carried away bridge. In September of 1847, Henry Jones, J. H. DeMoss, and Philip Rollins received a $450 contract from the County Court to build a new bridge. In March of 1849, shortly after its completion, the new bridge "was carried away by a freshet."* [Note. Melting snow plus a heavy rain can produce a freshet.] It is unclear whether the bridge was salvaged or replaced.

Ref. *1878 History, p. 260; and 1940 History, p. 22.

This may have been a covered bridge, however, I have found little verifiable information about the bridge.

Of salvaged or replaced, salvaged is perhaps correct, as its life was rather short.

This bridge was replaced in 1854-1856, which will be discussed later.

The quoted words were written by Otho F. Pearre in the 1878 History. The word "FRESHET" may be archaic, but it was well chosen for the situation.

The 1840 bridge and this 1847 bridge very likely were built with wooden beams cut from tall and straight trees.

Width of the bridges would have been enough for one wagon, and if either of the bridges were covered, some loads of hay would probably be too wide to enter.

Going ahead in time by three years, the county's population of 759 in 1840, doubled to 1552 in 1850, but, in Pontiac, the population was only 27, even though it was the county seat, and had been for thirteen years.

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SIX.

Town of Richmond. In 1851, proprietors Henry Jones and Henry Loveless laid out the town of Richmond about two miles east of Pontiac. Although lots did not sell, the proprietors had hopes that a north-south railroad would be built near their town. In 1854 the railroad came, however, its tracks were laid to the west of Pontiac. Richmond died, but its name clung to the area for many years.

Ref. Deed book C, p. 174; and 1940 History, p. 8.

The plat of Richmond contained approximately ten acres. It was laid off about three blocks square, with an oversized lot in the northwest corner for a school, and a central public square or park. The location of Richmond would have been to the north of the jog in the road that runs east from the grove where the Legion Billet is located.

Glowing articles of little substance have been written about the town, articles similar to the following: "Richmond was laid out in 1851 by Henry Jones and Henry Loveless. With prospects of a north-south railroad going through, it boomed for a time and became one of the most important towns in the county. The railroad, however, missed it by two miles and that made an end to the career of the town."

There is no recorded sale of a Richmond lot.

Tax records for 1853 and 1854 indicate no transfers, all sixty lots were listed as owned by the proprietors. Tax records indicate that lot No. 1 had been improved by the proprietors, perhaps with a building for some type of business activity. No evidence was found that one or more buildings may have been erected on adjacent land.

Additional data in Appendix, page 14.

August 1853 is the earliest deed date for right-of-way land in Livingston County for the railroad that came through Pontiac. It was then known as the Chicago & Mississippi Railroad.

Jesse Fell sold four tacts to the railroad on 29 Sept 1853.

Date of survey for Fell's first addition is 6 Oct 1853.

Boundaries for the addition are: on the north, an unnamed street now known as Cleary; on the west, Ladd; on the south, the river; on the east, Division, which separated the addition from the original town; all east and west streets were aligned with Pontiac streets and carried the same names.

The addition was accepted on 31 December 1853 by county court, composed of Judge B. P. Babcock, and two associate Justices.

Babcock was a newly installed judge, which we learn in the next item.

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SEVEN.

Three judges. Billings P. Babcock was elected to the office of County Judge in 1853 for a term of four years, taking office on 7 December 1853. Judge Babcock resigned at the end of his third year, and Judge Charles M. Lee served out the fourth year. Lee was followed by Judge Henry Jones, who won the office in the November 1857 election. (This Henry Jones* came to Pontiac in 1855; the Henry Jones** mentioned in items FIVE and SIX died in 1854.) During the three years that Judge Babcock held office, the first **truss** bridge at Mill Street and the county's second courthouse were constructed, see items EIGHT and TEN.

Ref. 1888 History, p. 523; 1940 History, p. 67;
LCHS UPDATE, dated 24 October 1985; also
*deed book F, p. 296 and **probate #1115.

Before the elections in 1849, the county court was composed of three justices of equal status.

In 1849 this was changed and the first person elected to serve as county judge was James C. McMillan, who was installed on 23 November 1849, an odd numbered year.

McMillan served less than a year.

Judge Murrell Breckenridge, who took office on 17 September 1850, served in McMillan's stead until the election of Babcock in 1853.

Although Babcock was the third person to hold the office, he was only the second person to be elected to a four year term to the office of county judge.

It was not until 1882 that judgeship terms were changed to begin in even numbered (biennial) years. This happened while Robert R. Wallace was Judge. Wallace served from 1873 to 1894, a total of eleven years. The change from odd years to even years had little effect on his tenure.

Associate Justices serving with Judge Babcock were, Eli Myer and John Darnell.* Associate Justices were discontinued when the townships elected supervisors.

*Darnell is a very early family name in Livingston County.

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EIGHT.

Truss bridge. The Mill Street bridge built during Judge Babcock's term of office, see item SEVEN, used trusses made of wood. This covered bridge remained in use until replaced by an iron bridge sometime before 1888.

Ref. 1888 History, p. 523.

If the truss bridge had been constructed in 1855 and replaced in 1875, it would have served twenty years, a longer time than the combined time of previous bridges, even if a bridge of some sort had been built a year before the town was laid out.

There is a possibility that this bridge may have been the subject of paintings that claim to be paintings of an earlier bridge.

In his book, AS I RECALL THEM, Charles Nettleton Strevell* mentions this bridge on page 37.

There are pictures and paintings of the iron bridge.

Pontiac's population growth did not expand significantly until after the railroad came in 1854. As railroads came, the whole county expanded rapidly. From a population of 1552 in 1850, the county population grew to 11,637 in 1860. And, of course, Pontiac's population also grew.

Pontiac became a village on 12 February 1856. Five trustees were elected to rule and administer to the needs of the village. Those five were: Nelson Buck, J. W. Strevelle, S. C. Ladd, Z. H. Nettleton and H. Jones. This H. Jones was the same Jones who later became a Judge. Tax records carried his name as H. Jones even though he was known as Henry Jones.

*When the Strevelle family lived in Pontiac, their surname ended with an "e." When they moved west, they left the final "e" in Pontiac. Mr. Strevell lived many years in the very old home at 401 West Livingston Street. This building site was purchased on the first day of July in 1855 by Z. H. Nettleton. It is presumed that a portion of the present residence was erected in the last half of 1855. Mr. Nettleton had an early death. Although his probate file at the courthouse is empty, its low number of 1577 indicates that Z. H. Nettleton had an early death. His widow married J. W. Strevelle.

In recent years, Bert Tallman has owned the property. In the past few weeks, Dr. Wm. E. Hammond purchased the property.

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NINE.

First brick building. Standing at 315 West Howard Street is a brick residence that was built by the Henry Jones who became a County Judge, see item SEVEN. Reported as the first brick building in the county, construction probably started late in the fall of 1855, with completion early in 1856.

Ref. Deed book F, p. 296; 1878 History, p. 242; and
LCHS UPDATE, dated 24 October 1985.

In the Deed recorded in Book F, page 296, we find the following statement: "Henry Jones of Emmet County, Iowa, ..."

Henry paid $150.00 for the lot. There was a small frame building on the lot which was moved to the front east corner. It was a print shop and the following men were mentioned in land records pertaining to that print shop:

Goodyear A. Sandford; Philip Cook; Mark A. Renoe;
Robert P. Law; A. Dickerman; Evans Blake.

Brick for the new two story structure were hauled from Bloomington.

Was hauling cheaper than using the railroad?

The quality of this brick became the standard for brick specified for the second courthouse.

Tax records indicate that Henry Jones and a partner, Edwin C. Jones, operated a store of some kind in the new brick structure. Edwin may have been related to Henry, a connection was not found. The partnership ended on 3 January 1857, with a quit claim deed for $1250, deed book I, page 312. Edwin's wife, Mary L. Jones, signed the deed with her husband. The $1250 was Edwin's share of the business and the property. A few weeks later, on 11 February 1857, Henry C. Jones, the older son of Henry Jones, enjoyed his nineteenth birthday. The son became a clerk in his father's store, apparently, filling Edwin's position.

Probably to cover the cost of buying out Edwin, father Henry borrowed money in February and March totaling $1020. Those notes were paid by borrowing $976 in February of 1859.

On 21 March 1859 a small loan was obtained. Apparently, it was soon after this that father and son, Henry and Henry C., left Pontiac for the gold fields of California. The $976 note was not paid, so the property was foreclosed and sold in June of 1860.

Additional Jones data in Appendix, pages 14 and 15.

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TEN.

Second courthouse. Courthouse number two, a brick structure, was constructed in 1856, the third and last year that Judge Babcock held office. The county court accepted the new edifice on 6 December 1856. On 4 July 1874, this building was destroyed by fire; fortunately, a vault--built a couple of years earlier--protected the records.

Ref. 1878 History, p. 242; 1940 History, p. 72; and LCHS UPDATE, dated 24 October 1985.

Construction of this courthouse did not start until after April 24th, the date that its placement on the public square was settled.

According to text on page 242 of 1878 History, brick used in this structure was supposed to be of a quality equal to or better than brick used in the Judge Jones building on Howard Street.

The fire that destroyed the brick courthouse was caused by 4th of July fireworks. Some buildings in the block to the south were also destroyed.

Babcock served as county judge for only three years, but during those three years, at least six important events occurred:

1. Fells First Addition, 31 Dec 1853
2. First Railroad train, 4 July 1854
3. First brick building, Judge Jones house on Howard Street.
4. First covered bridge using truss design.
5. Pontiac became a self governing village, 12 Feb 1856.
6. First brick courthouse.

A seventh event could be added: Pontiac's population and the county's population expanded considerably.

In the biographical sketch of Judge Babcock on page 523 of the 1888 History, the judge becomes somewhat critical of the iron bridge that replaced his covered bridge, and of the courthouse that replaced the one he had built. Babcock says that, "He, with two Associate Justices as County Commissioners, built the first truss bridge over the Vermilion River at Pontiac, and the brick courthouse, which was destroyed by fire in 1874. Both were substantial improvements and a much greater undertaking for those times than the iron bridge and the beautiful courthouse of the present, with the better facilities for construction."

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ELEVEN.

JONES HOUSE. Built by John Dehner, the JONES HOUSE at 314 East Madison Street, is the second oldest brick residence in Pontiac. Mr. Dehner purchased this property in October of 1857. John Dehner lost little time in starting the construction of his brick home, and it was completed rather early in 1858. In August of 1899, the late Henry C. Jones, a son of Judge Jones, purchased this property. It is from Henry C. Jones that the house gets its present name.

Ref. Deed book M, p. 64; deed book 120, p. 588; and GENEALOGY OF THE JONES HOUSE, paragraphs 21, 40 and 46.

John Dehner and a partner, Job Dye, purchased property on the west side of the square in February of 1857. It was the first building north of the present three story building. Later that same year, 23 October, John Dehner purchased the property on which he built the brick home, now known as the JONES HOUSE. Tax records indicate that some construction was done late that same year. In February of 1858, the new home should have been near completion, however, we find that John Dehner ended his business partnership by paying Job Dye the sum of $3,300--big money in those days--for a quit claim deed for his share of the business and the property.

At the time of the above deal, Joseph Dehner, John's oldest son, was nearing his majority and he probably became an important man in his father's clothing business. The business expanded into the room to the south. Joseph was married in April of 1859. Their business prospered well into the seventies. Late in the seventies, Mr. Dehner lost his home and other holdings, due, probably, to poor investments.

The brick home was rental property when Henry C. Jones purchased it. Henry lived there twenty-one years before he died. His widow, Mary, lived in the home another twenty-one years. It then passed to the daughter, Nelle Jones Hershey, wife of Roy G. Hershey. Nelle died and the property passed to Roy. When Roy Hershey died the property passed to his protégé, Gerald Maxwell. Gerald sold the property in November of 1957.

That sale broke a span of more than fifty-eight years during which the home had not been bought or sold. A fire damaged the structure in September of 1975. The late Francis E. Lehman and the late Reid R. Tombaugh purchased the property in 1976 for the Livingston County Historical Society, and the Society took title in June of 1977.

See additional data in Appendix, Item D., page 15.

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TWELVE.

Bird's eye view. The "Remember?" feature by Barbara Sancken in a 1985 issue of The Daily Leader carried a report dated Feb. 4, 1945. The report stated that Miss Emeline Cowan had found several collector's items in an old trunk. The text concerning one item shall be quoted: "A color print showed a bird's eye view of Pontiac as it was in 1869, only 32 years after the town was founded. A covered bridge spanned the Vermilion at Mill street; the only other bridge was that of the C. & A. railroad. A race track was located on the present site of Play park. There were no east-west streets south of South street."

Ref. The Daily Leader of February 4, 1985, page 4.

The covered bridge, mentioned above, would have been the truss bridge constructed while Judge Billings P. Babcock was in office. See Item EIGHT.

At the time of the picture, South Division Street did not exist, so there were no streets west of the line where Division is now. The west ends of Grove, Henry and South were dead ends at that line.

The south side cemetery was in use with an entrance on South Street. Since the time of the picture, the cemetery has been expanded to the north, taking some of the Play Park property. It has also been expanded to the south.

The State Reform School was authorized on 5 Mar 1867, see 1940 History p. 7. How soon the Reform School was ready to operate is not known at the time of this writing.

Fell's 2nd. Addition Plat is dated 5 November 1869. The boundary on the north was the river; the east boundary was Division Street from Grove to Lincoln streets, which opened the west ends of Grove, Henry and South streets, and they were continued into the new addition; the boundary on the south was Lincoln Street; the west boundary between Lincoln and Reynolds streets was a road along the railroad, and north of Reynolds Street the west boundary was (Harvard) or Harward Street.

The date of 1 April 1870 was set for the opening to the public of Reynolds Street from the C. & A. railroad to Division Street, and the opening of Division Street from Lincoln Street to Grove Street. Lincoln Street, although named and platted, was not opened at that time, however, the Reform School may have had a narrow roadway along their property. Lincoln Street and portions of the plat that were fenced and under cultivation at that time were reserved until 1 April 1871.

With an installation of a railroad crossing at Reynolds Street, this subdivision would provide access from a country road west of the

ITEM TWELVE CONTINUED.

crossing to downtown Pontiac via Reynolds, Division, Grove and then Mill and across the bridge; or instead of Mill and the bridge, the ford across the river behind the jail could be used when the river level permitted.

This subdivision also provided access from the recently laid out grounds of the State Reform School to downtown Pontiac via a connection at the south end of Division Street at Lincoln Street.

All of the streets, with one exception, in the Fells 2nd. Addition Plat were platted with a width from property line to property line of sixty-six feet. The exception is Vermillion Street, it has a width of one hundred feet. With this extra width, it would appear that Vermillion Street was laid out for a future grand thoroughfare to the main entrance of the State Reform School.

As of this writing, your reporter does not have the date when the first bridge was constructed at Vermillion Street. A steel structure is remembered. It had wood block paving. A wood planked walkway was attached to the east side of the bridge.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

DEEDS. DEEDS and PROBATES are on file at the Courthouse.

1878 History. This book is entitled: The HISTORY OF LIVINGSTON COUNTY, ILLINOIS. Published by Wm. Le Baron, Jr., & Co., Chicago, 1878.

1888 History. This book is entitled: PORTRAIT AND BIOGRAPHICAL ALBUM of Livingston County, Ill. Published 1888, by Chapman Brothers, Chicago.

1940 History. This book is entitled: INVENTORY OF THE COUNTY ARCHIVES OF ILLINOIS, NO. 53, LIVINGSTON COUNTY [PONTIAC]. Prepared by The Illinois Historical Records Survey, Division of Professional and Service Projects, Works Project Administration, Chicago, Illinois, 1940.

LIBRARY. Above history books, LCHS UPDATE, GENEALOGY OF THE JONES HOUSE, and microfilm of The Daily Leader can be seen at the Pontiac Public Library.

In addition to these references, anyone who studies history should research as many sources as can be found.

Except for the two page Appendix, this study of one dozen history items is ended.

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APPENDIX, Item A.

TEXT OF ONE PARAGRAPH OF AN ARTICLE FROM A PAPER DISTRIBUTED BY THE PONTIAC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. THE PAPER WAS PREPARED BY THE ILLINOIS OFFICE OF TOURISM AND IT IS ENTITLED, "HISTORIC PONTIAC."

"PONTIAC'S OLDEST BRICK HOME, 315 W. Howard St."

"The home was built by one of Pontiac's earliest settlers. Henry Jones was an attorney and a judge. He built the first mill in Pontiac and platted the town of Richmond, east of Pontiac. Richmond, while once a thriving town the size of Pontiac, is now gone without a house left standing--a result of the railroad coming to Pontiac instead of Richmond." **[This text ignores the fact that there is an 1854 probate record, #1115, on file for a man named Henry Jones. This and other facts are presented in the paragraphs that follow.]**

Item B. **One of Two Men Named Henry Jones**

Refer to page 6. In October of 1850, Joseph T. Jones, age 20, and Susan Popejoy, age 18, were married. In August of 1852, Henry Jones, a widower and the father of Joseph, married Elizabeth R. Popejoy, age about 44. Apparently, Elizabeth was an aunt to Susan.

Taking office on 4 September 1848, Henry Jones served as a County Commissioner. In September of 1847, Henry Jones and two other men were granted a contract to build a bridge across the Vermilion River. The bridge was washed away by high water in March of 1849.

In 1851, Henry Jones and Henry Loveless laid out the town of Richmond about two miles east of Pontiac. The partners hoped that a north-south railroad would be built near their town. In 1854, the railroad came through several blocks west of downtown Pontiac. Deed records and tax records indicate that no lots in the town of Richmond were sold.

Henry Jones **died** in September of 1854, according to the probate record. Elizabeth R. Jones, the widow, and Joseph T. Jones, the only surviving offspring listed, requested the appointment of Thomas A. Jones, a brother of the deceased, as administrator of the estate.

Item C. **One of Two Men Named Henry Jones**

Refer to page 9. Henry Jones of Emmet County, Iowa, purchased lot number six in block number twenty-nine of Pontiac on the first day of October in 1855, according to deed records. This Henry Jones, a few years earlier, had left his wife, Emily (nee DeMoss), and children in this area to join the 1849 California gold rush. In returning from the gold fields, Henry stopped for a time in Iowa. On lot six, mentioned above, Henry and a partner, Edwin C. Jones, quickly built

APPENDIX, Item C, continued.

the brick structure that still stands at 315 W. Howard St. The building was probably completed early in 1856 and, apparently, it housed a retail venture of some sort. Henry bought out Edwin, his partner, in January of 1857. Eighteen year old Henry C. Jones became a clerk in his father's store.

In February of 1856, Henry Jones was elected a Trustee to serve on the first Board of Trustees for the village of Pontiac. Although not an attorney, Henry Jones was elected to the Office of County Judge in November of 1857.

In the spring of 1859, yielding to the lure of California gold, father and son headed west. Their brick structure on West Howard Street was sold at foreclosure in February of 1860. The assessed valuation of this property became very low in 1870 and 1871. Here a quote from page 242 in the 1878 History of Livingston County is appropriate: ". . . Judge Henry Jones erected, at Pontiac, the first brick building ever erected in the county. It is the one that has recently been remodeled, and is now occupied as a residence by Joseph P. Turner."

Item D. **John Dehner, Henry C. Jones, JONES HOUSE**

Refer to Page 11. Apparently, this property had been improved with a frame building of one or two rooms before its purchase by John Dehner on 23 October 1857. Soon after the purchase, Mr. Dehner had the present brick structure erected against the north or front side of the frame building. When completed, early in 1858, the kitchen remained in the frame portion and the brick portion provided living and sleeping quarters. Mr. Dehner was a successful merchant on the west side of the square for many years.

Near the end of the Civil War, Henry C. Jones left California and came back to Pontiac. Here he entered the newspaper publishing business, which he pursued until 1871. Moving to Texas, he continued in the newspaper field a few years, then moved to California and a prune farm. About 1893, he came back to Pontiac to head up an electric generating company.

Henry C. Jones purchased this brick residence in August of 1899, and it became known as the JONES HOUSE. At about the same time, Mr. Jones entered the ice business, founding the business later known as the Pontiac Ice and Fuel Co.

A fire in the JONES HOUSE, in September of 1975, severely damaged the frame portion in the rear and heavily damaged the brick portion. When demolition of the whole structure loomed, members of the Livingston County Historical Society came to its rescue. Still needed to complete the restoration is an addition on the rear to replace the original frame portion.

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